/39 cont./

782 among the articles so laid out, with a "chikila" (a kind of
755 veil) on his head, and begs, "Adgil-ankhu, Atula-ankhuse, grant him your favor! Give him firmess of head, heart, and body! Give him color, skin, and bone! Give him back the will to speak and to work! Give him strength! Deliver him from evil," etc. In the same way she also prays to Adabna. After this, she removes the chikila from the sick person with a nut-twig, raises him, strikes him on the back with a whip, and says, "Go, from this day I grant you freedom (azati)," and then both go home. At home a loaf of millet-bread is broken in two; two women each take a half and stand on the two sides of the hearth opposite each other; the sick person passes three times between them under the loaf, while one of the women exclaims, "Give me the one who has assumed the Hebrew belief," and the other, "Give me the convert to Christianity."

753 The Abkhaz is convinced that the invisible being that
755 settled in the sick man hastens immediately upon leaving him to enter someone else, and so, to help him find a new victim, they pray to him at the crossroads, where there is a continuous /40/ traffic of people, and, subsequently, a victim is always found it is unnecessary to search very long. And since an illness can be caught from a spot where a person accidentally fell or sat down, the rite of appeasing the
●[823] earth must be performed on the very same spot of the falling or sitting from which the sickness originated; the doll must be buried on exactly the same spot. This is why, in order not to catch something evil from the spot where he sat down,
[789] the Abkhaz spits three times on getting up and says, "Here stood the house and courtyard of my grandfather!"

2.

The Ceremony in Honor of the Water

782 When someone is ill for a long time with a fever, a
755 female fortune-teller is asked for advice and help; she usually
791

/41 cont./

515 782 823 [783] Fearing to defile it, the Abkhaz avoids bathing in running water; if he bathes, upon coming out /42/ of the water he takes three stones and says, "I sinned against you today; I went into the water and bathed, but you, forgive me." With this prayer, he passes the pebbles around his head with his hands and throws them into the water.

3.

The Ceremony in Honor of the Rainbow

753 [755] [782] The ceremony in honor of the rainbow, which is not obligatory for all, is performed for the greater part on persons whose sickness, according to the female fortune-teller, is caused by the rainbow. A prolonged yellowness of the face, a weakening of the organism, instability of character -- the [821] Abkhaz attributes all these to the fact that the sick person entered water at the very moment when the rainbow was drinking from it.

755 782 "Sinless" old women, having planned a sacrifice and promised a prayer, lead the sick person out to a brook; they take with them two fried capons, two stuffed loaves of unleavened bread in the shape of a tongue, and other provisions, as in the performance of the ceremony in honor of the water. On both sides of the brook, clean objects are laid out, such as clothes, silver, etc., a little bridge made of thread is thrown over the river from one bank to another. Having prepared all this, the praying-woman, with a doll that has been prepared beforehand in her hands, walks around the sick person, who is kneeling down covered with a piece of calico, and prays for him to the rainbow, known by the name Eliaphshi; then she takes a candle and addresses a similar prayer to the "Mistress Mother of the Water," and her "lord husband." After praying over the provisions she takes some [789] of each dish and throws it into the water; she places the doll in a pumpkin, and, after adorning the latter with lighted

3: Janashia I-5 (ca. 1900) 1937 RI3 Abkhas RI3
Adzvibzha

I quote here the following story: "A female slave of a family,
796 539 [567] being angry with her masters, took a portion of the dough for *akwakwàr* destined for the " god " *Got'anùa*, and placing it in a scoop of bitter-gourd (*akwapey*, Geo. *kopa*), hid it in the loft. As usual the family went to bed after the ceremony. But unfortunately for them the offended *Got'anùa* soundly thrashed all of them, using for the purpose the very same scoop in which had been hidden the dough destined for himself. This *gvari* makes propitiatory offerings at the will of sorcerers to *Got'anùa* twice a year, during the night before Christmas and before the Assumption.

Got'anùa, under the name of *Okhvàmuri*, evidently spread throughout Megrelia during the missionaryship of Lamberti.[1]

V. Deities whose Cults have no Fixed Dates

1. *Et-nòkha—Àga-nòkha*

796 [802] [787] The sea, like other manifestations of nature, has its own " part of deity ", called *Àga-inkhwò* or *àga-intswakhwò*. An Abkhaz makes an offering to this deity when he goes to the sea coast for any considerable time. The sea deity is not to be trifled with ; if it is slighted it becomes turbulent, it surges, and punishes the unrespectful. Therefore even the children are forbidden to throw pebbles, or to spit into the sea. The worship of this deity has been preserved in its purest form among the Bzib Abkhasians, namely among the peasantry of the Gudout (Gudaut) district, of the *gvari* of Amp'aràa. It has been described by A. Tch(ukbar), in *Sotrùdnik Zakavkazskoy Missii* (" The Collabarator of the Transcaucasian Mission "), 1912, p. 373 sqq., where the deity *Et-nòkh-Àga-nòkha* is called *Et-nykh Ag-Nykh*. *Àga* denotes sea, *(a)nòkh*—" icon." But what does the word *Et* denote ?[2]

2. *Àshkha-intswakhwò* (god of mountains)

[803] Mountains also have " their part of God " known under the name of *Àshkha-intswakhwò*. *Àshkha* denotes mountain ; *intswakhwò*, " his (of the male rational being) part of God." I have pointed out above that the Abkhaz often uses the word *nòkha* in the sense of god, which in the Christian faith is understood, or more correctly, translated, as icon. The god of mountains " governs " all the mountains and the beasts inhabiting them. Abkhaz shepherds make offerings to this [233] god twice a year, in the spring when they drive the cattle to the mountains, and in the autumn when they drive them back. To him [805] are subject also mountain game. In order to preserve the game from

[1] A. Lamberti, op. cit., pp. 148-9.

[2] This word manifests a consonance with the Assyro-Babylonian name of the god of the sea, *Ea*. Is this a mere coincidence ?